

**Statement for the Record**  
**Congresswoman Suzan DelBene**  
**Washington's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District**

HASC Member Testimony Day  
Wednesday, May 8, 2013

Chairman McKeon and Ranking Member Smith, thank you for the opportunity to submit a statement to the Committee today. As you work towards the markup of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2014, I urge you to consider supporting the expansion and integration of Solar Electric In-Space Propulsion (SEP) technology, an advanced, highly efficient method of propulsion used in space to place and reposition spacecraft in orbit, for National Security Space missions.

The benefits of this SEP technology are significant. SEP technology has the potential to maximize the size and lifespan of space assets, as well as reduce the costs to launch them. For the Air Force, advanced SEP systems are successfully flying on the first two Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellites. These technologies, in the form of Hall current thrusters (HCT), associated power processing unit, electronics, hardware and solar arrays were, in fact, used to save the AEHF-1 mission when the vehicle's bipropellant propulsion system intended to raise AEHF-1 to its final Geosynchronous Orbit (GEO) failed. The AEHF-1 HCTs, intended for only the last 20% of orbit-raising in addition to all station keeping for the life of the satellite, were successfully used to perform the full orbit raising portion of the mission and did so without loss of satellite service life. By preventing this loss, SEP technology has already provided a significant savings to the U.S. Government.

Particularly in light of the current budget climate, we must prioritize high-value and cost-saving technologies that will provide a great return on our investment. Continuing our nation's leadership in developing these technologies is critical to our national security, and will also play a key role in driving our nation's economic growth through the creation of high-technology jobs. I hope you will agree that SEP's importance to national security and job creation merits further investment. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your support of technology advancement in the NDAA.